

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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USEEC AND USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSIES

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, SP
SUBJECT: 31ST UGT CONGRESS, MAY 25-28, 1978, BARCELONA

1. WITH THE 31ST UGT CONGRESS ONLY ONE WEEK AWAY,
THE SOCIALIST TRADE UNION HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN
MADRID ON MAY 18, TO DISCUSS THE EVENT. HIGHLIGHTS
FOLLOW.

2. SOME 1,200 DELEGATES WOULD ATTEND, REPRESENTING THE
"CLOSE TO TWO MILLION MEMBERS". DOMESTIC ORGANIZATIONS
TO BE INVITED INCLUDED THE PSOE, PSC, THE BASQUE STV,
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AND THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS' COMMISSIONS. THERE
WOULD BE SOME 80 INTERNATIONAL GUESTS FROM OVER 38
COUNTRIES, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE ICFTU,
ETUC, AND THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS (ITS).
UGT SECGEN NICOLAS REDONDO STATED THAT "CONSOLIDATION",
THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE UNION'S STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION,
AND STEPPED-UP SOCIAL AND LABOR SERVICES FOR THE MEMBER-

SHIP WOULD BE THE MAIN THEMES OF THE CONGRESS. BARCELONA HAD BEEN CHOSEN AS THE LOCALE IN ORDER TO FORGE A HISTORICAL LINK "WITH THE UGT OF 1936 -- 1,250,000 MEMBERS STRONG."

3. MOTIONS FROM THE FIFTY PROVINCIAL AND 21 INDUSTRIAL FEDERATIONS WOULD BE DEBATED. ONE GROUP OF COMMITTEES WOULD STUDY THE ADEQUACY OF THE UGT'S ORGANIZATION TO MEET "THE REAL SITUATION OF THE COUNTRY", AND WOULD DISCUSS THE BROAD RANGE OF NEEDED UNION SERVICES. ANOTHER BLOC OF COMMITTEES WOULD TACKLE SUCH PROBLEMS AS RELATIONS WITH OTHER UNIONS, "UNITY OF ACTION", COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, UNION-POLITICAL PARTY RELATIONSHIPS, AND THE MONCLOA PACT. THE QUESTION OF MINORITY ELEMENTS WITHIN THE UGT WOULD ALSO BE DISCUSSED, AND REDONDO EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THROUGH DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES THE UNION COULD ASSIMILATE THE "DIFFERENT IDEOLOGICAL TENDENCIES" CURRENTLY OPERATING (ALTHOUGH "NOT ORGANIZED"). REDONDO WAS ALANOTHER BLOC OF COMMITTEES WOULD TACKLE SUCH PROBLEMS AS RELATIONS WITH OTHER UNIONS, "UNITY OF ACTION", COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, UNION-POLITICAL PARTY RELATIONSHIPS, AND THE MONCLOA PACT. THE QUESTION OF MINORITY ELEMENTS WITHIN THE UGT WOULD ALSO BE DISCUSSED, AND REDONDO EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THROUGH DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES THE UNION COULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASSIMILATE THE "DIFFERENT IDEOLOGICAL TENDENCIES" CURRENTLY OPERATING (ALTHOUGH "NOT ORGANIZED"). REDONDO WAS ALSO QUESTIONED REGARDING THE PSOE'S ALLEGED DROPPING OF THE TERM MARXISM (MADRID 5140). HE REPEATED EARLIER STATEMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT IT WAS IN REALITY PLAYING WITH WORDS -- "IN A UNION, THE TERM MARXISM IS NOT NECESSARY. IN ADDITION, THE UGT PRECEPTS CONTAIN A CLEAR DEFINITION OF THE CLASS-ORIENTED TRADE UNION WHICH ASPIRES TO THE APPROPRIATION OF THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION, THUS MAKING THE WORD MARXISM REDUNDANT." IN ANSWER TO A FOLLOW-UP QUESTION, REDONDO SAID THAT HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY PARTICULAR REACTION FROM THE UNION BASE WITH RESPECT TO THE MARXIST ISSUE, AND HE DID NOT BELIEVE IT LIKELY THAT ANY MEMBERS WOULD WANT TO SWITCH OVER TO THE CC.OO.

4. COMMENT. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THE MATTER OF THE NON-INVITATION OF THE AFL-CIO TO THE UGT CONGRESS (MADRID 3802) HAS NOT SURFACED PUBLICLY. THE UGT HAS BEEN TAKING THE GENERAL LINE THAT WITH RESPECT TO FOREIGN GUESTS, IT IS INVITING BASICALLY ICFTU AFFILIATES, WHICH WOULD OBVIOUSLY EXCLUDE THE AFL-CIO. THUS, WE DO NOT ANTICI-

PATE THE PRESENCE OF ANY AMERICAN LABOR LEADERS IN
BARCELONA. THE FOUR LABOR ATTACHES STATIONED IN MADRID
HAVE BEEN INVITED (I.E. BRITISH, FRENCH, WEST GERMAN
AND U.S.), AND WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE WEST GERMAN
WHO WILL BE ATTENDING THE DGB CONGRESS, WILL BE PRESENT.
DUE TO EUROPEAN LABOR ATTACHE CONFERENCE IN COPENHAGEN,
LABATT WILL ONLY ATTEND FIRST TWO DAYS OF UGT CONGRESS.
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